

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method of forming an axle comprising the steps of:
  - a) arranging an axle component mounting member into a die assembly;
  - b) arranging a tubular member in the die assembly within an opening in the mounting member;
  - c) pressurizing a cavity within the tubular member; and
  - d) deforming a portion the tubular member into engagement with mounting member to affix the mounting member to the tubular member.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein the mounting member is a bearing shoulder sleeve.
3. The method according to claim 1, wherein the mounting member is a brake flange.
4. The method according to claim 1, further including the step of arranging a material between the mounting component and the tubular member for preventing corrosion therebetween.
5. The method according to claim 1, wherein the mounting member includes a recess, and step d) includes deforming a portion of the tubular member into the recess.
6. The method according to claim 5, wherein the recess is at least one hole.

7. The method according to claim 5, wherein the recess is defined by a splined surface arranged about the tubular member.

8. The method according to claim 1, further including the step of hydroforming the tubular member into a desired axle shape.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the opening of the mounting member is defined by a generally concave surface.

10. An axle assembly comprising:  
a tubular member having an outer wall and an interior cavity, said outer wall including a first interlocking feature; and  
an axle component mounting member arranged on a portion of said outer wall, said mounting member including a second interlocking feature coacting with said first interlocking feature to affix said mounting member and tubular member to one another.

11. The assembly according to claim 10, wherein said mounting member is a bearing shoulder sleeve.

12. The assembly according to claim 10, wherein said mounting member is a brake flange.

13. The assembly according to claim 10, further including a material disposed between said portion of said outer wall and mounting member.

14. The assembly according to claim 10, wherein said interlocking features include complimentary splines.

15. The assembly according to claim 10, wherein said second interlocking feature is a hole and said first interlocking feature is a protrusion extending into said hole.

16. The assembly according to claim 10, wherein said mounting member includes a generally concave annular surface in engagement with said portion of said tubular member.